

REMARKS

Claims 11-32 are now pending.

In the Office Action, claims 11-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,568,845 (Baumgartner et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,838,928 (Blaurock et al.)

Baumgartner et al. describes a counter nut 800 threaded on the external threads of the adjusting spindle 71, and a disc spring 801 which is also threaded on the adjusting spindle 71 to provide a longitudinal force against the counter nut 800. The disc spring 801 axially pre-stresses the counter nut 800 against the adjusting spindle 71, resulting in a definite friction force between the internal threads of the counter nut 800 and the external threads of the adjusting spindle 71. (See Fig. 2B and Col. 7, lines 35-56.) The disc spring 801 does not interact with the threads of the transverse member 7. As also pointed out on page 3 of the Office Action, Baumgartner et al. thus does not describe the claimed spring ring and groove.

Blaurock et al. describes a spacer ring for separating two elements, such as parts of a machine. The spacer elements may be bent into a spacer ring 124, as shown in Figs 7 and 8, to secure a cylindrical shaft 128 into an oversized cylindrical bore 132. (Col. 3, line 64 to Col. 4, line 5.) Accordingly, the spacer

ring described in the present reference is designed to maintain the relative position of the shaft 128 within the oversized bore 132 of the wheel 126, by filling in the space found therebetween, due to the bore 132 being larger than the shaft. Nothing in this reference describes or suggests that the spacer ring is anything other than a spacer, designed to fill in the void between the shaft and the oversized bore.

In particular, the reference does not describe using the spacer ring to inhibit rotation of the two elements, and certainly not to inhibit the rotation up to a defined torque. In fact, the shape of some portions of the spacer ring, such as edge portions 156 and 174 shown in Figs 9, 10, suggests that if any movement inhibition takes place, it would be in the axial direction.

In contrast, claims 11 and 24 recite a spring ring frictionally engaged in a ring groove formed in one of the threaded bore and the adjusting screw, the spring ring being also frictionally engaged with an opposite thread of the other one of the threaded bore and the adjusting screw, to provide a rotation inhibiting effect on the adjusting screw up to a defined torque. Thus, the claimed rotation inhibition is not described in Blaurock et al.

The combination of the references set forth in the Office Action also fails to describe the claimed arrangement resulting in inhibiting the rotation up to a defined torque. In fact, even if the combination was proper, the resulting

structure would be different from that which is claimed. Neither cited reference describes a spring ring which is frictionally engaged between a threaded bore and a threaded screw, since Baumgartner clearly shows the disk spring 801 only engaging the threaded spindle 71, while Blaurock does not show any threaded elements.

Further, because of the narrow clearance necessary between two elements that are threaded together, such as between the claimed threaded bore and the claimed adjusting screw, one could not utilize the oversized bore described in Blaurock. Accordingly, between elements such as those recited in claims 11 and 24, there would be no need, and for that matter no room, for the spacer ring described by Blaurock.

In view of the foregoing remarks, applicants respectfully submit that claims 11 and 24 are allowable over the cited art, and are in condition for allowance. The remaining pending claims depend from allowable claims, and at least for that reason are also submitted to be allowable. All issues raised by the examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

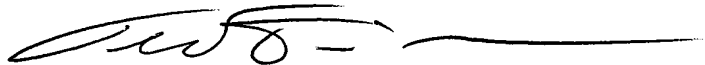
If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

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Attorney Docket No. 037068.56316US

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #037068.56316US).

Respectfully submitted,

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